

Several months ago, the BCRUA announced its intentions to pursue constructing a deep water intake and pumping station on Site 4, at the end of Jackson Street within the Village of Volente. The Village of Volente has consistently opposed the construction of this facility within a residentially zoned neighborhood due to the potential impacts of a project of this scope.

After consulting with our legal and legislative lobbying experts, the Village sent the BCRUA a letter detailing the permitting and ordinance requirements for Site 4. In this letter, the Village also asked that the BCRUA contact the Village to discuss alternatives. As has been the case for 4 years, our goal is to minimize the impact to neighborhood residents.

It is clear that the BCRUA will not pursue an option that bypasses Volente altogether without lengthy and expensive litigation, the outcome of which is uncertain for both sides.

The majority of the impact from the facility is associated with the pumping station being constructed and operated on a residential lot near homes. The Village asked the BCRUA to re-consider a plan that would move the pumping station outside of the Village, with the intake structure and maintenance building remaining on Site 4 and subject to the regulations of Volente. A tunnel under the Village would connect the pumping station to the intake.

Legal representatives for Volente and the BCRUA began working on a Memorandum of Understanding that states that Volente and the BCRUA intend to work together to get the necessary approvals to move the pumping station to Site 8, outside the Village. If those efforts are successful, then the Village will allow the construction of the intake structure and the maintenance building on Site 4, subject to Volente's ordinances.

The Memorandum of Understanding also states that if the efforts to move the pumping station to Site 8 are unsuccessful, then the BCRUA will continue to pursue Site 4 for the intake and pumping station, and Volente will continue to oppose any construction on Site 4 unless the BCRUA has obtained all required approvals from the Village. That is, if efforts to move the pumping station outside the Village fail, we return to the present situation.

This compromise avoids lengthy and expensive litigation, and several years of uncertainty for everyone involved. In addition, it avoids the majority of the residential impact from the construction and operation of the pumping station and the tunnel. The Village Council voted to support the Memorandum of Understanding. The BCRUA will consider the MOU at its next meeting on October 24, 2012.